



CITY OF MIDDLETOWN/TOWN OF PORTLAND JOINT PRESS RELEASE EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM



The City of Middletown, Town of Portland and the State of Connecticut want you to be safe and informed during emergencies in our area - including public health threats, dangerous weather, fires and public safety crises.

Recently, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to have a statewide emergency notification system. CT Alert ENS (Emergency Notification System) allows City and Town officials to help protect lives and property by providing critical information to residents during emergencies, including dangerous situations.

In the event of an emergency, Middletown and Portland's Emergency Service personnel can identify the affected geographic area of the City or the entire City and record a message that describes the situation and recommends the protective actions residents and local businesses should take. The CT Alert ENS will automatically send recorded messages to all contact devices (listed and unlisted wired, land-line phones, cell phones, PDAs, etc.) within the identified area. If phone lines are busy, the system will attempt to redial those numbers a predetermined number of times to make contact. If an answering machine picks up the call, the emergency message will be left on the machine.

It's important to be aware that CT Alert ENS uses the State's 9-1-1 database, which means it can only access your home location and that's only if you have a traditional "land line." So, if you want to receive notifications on a different device - or especially if you no longer have a "land line" - you must register those devices in order to receive alerts. Register at www.ctalert.gov.

If you want the system to send alerts to other communication devices that you use you can add mobile phones, Voice over IP landlines, wireless personal digital assistants, such as BlackBerry®, e-mail, text messaging, and/or instant messaging to be included to receive alerts from CT Alert ENS. You are responsible for any costs associated with your receipt of any emergency notification.

You can also choose the order in which you receive the emergency notification by specifying your contact path order for multiple communication devices. The system will cycle through your communication devices until the message is delivered and or confirmed on one of them. If you don't confirm receipt of the message, the system may try to reach your second contact number or email address if the message is critical and requires your confirmation.

To add additional devices log in to the State web page at www.ctalert.gov. That link is also available on the City of Middletown website at www.cityofmiddletown.com and Town of Portland website at www.portlandct.org. Without adding a device using this process only your home phone will receive alerts. If you are already registered on the CT Alert ENS, you can update your information by returning to the www.ctalert.gov website.

CT Alert ENS will not work with phone lines having call screening features. For example, if your phone line requires an individual to identify themselves through a recorded message before the call is accepted, the CT Alert ENS will not work. The system is designed to play the recorded message upon voice activation, such as a person saying "hello" or an answering machine recording

To stop receiving alerts simply delete your profile from the website. Deleting your profile will stop emergency notifications to the devices you registered in the system. CT ALERT ENS, you will no longer receive emergency notifications on those devices, but you still receive alerts on your traditional home telephone. At the present time the State of Connecticut has not authorized the deletion of land-line phones. Both the City of Middletown and Town of Portland have no control over this process.

CT Alert ENS will be used by local Emergency Management, Fire, Police and Public Health Departments, as well as the State's Homeland Security, Public Health and other agencies called upon during an emergency.

Some of the many uses of the system include: Emergency evacuations, Missing person alerts, Natural disaster alerts, Hazardous material situations, severe weather alerts, Police situations, Neighborhood emergency incidents, and Homeland Security issues.

More detailed information including the CT ALERT Emergency Notification System Policy adopted by the State of Connecticut can be found at www.cityofmiddletown.com and selecting the emergency preparedness link.

Here is some important system tips and information when there is a notification message sent:

- **Do not call 911 asking for general information about the message.** Only call the indicated number on the message when necessary. Don't call to simply to ask what happened.
- Listen carefully to the entire message and confirm receipt of call when possible.
- No routine updates are given. Only emergency messages/updates are sent out. Event conclusions are not sent out by this system. Please do not call for general updates.
- "CT ALERT ENS" will appear on your phones caller id. This is the programmed identifier set up by the State of Connecticut.

Remember, we can't alert you if we can't reach you. Sign up at www.ctalert.gov.

Any questions for both Middletown and Portland residents can be directed to 911@cityofmiddletown.com or by calling the Central Communications Center during routine business hours Monday - Friday at 860-343-8005.